

COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL PERFORMANCE  
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FOR RELEASE  
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JUDICIAL PERFORMANCE COMMISSION ISSUES  
PUBLIC ADMONISHMENT OF FORMER JUDGE ROBERT A. SCHNIDER

The Commission on Judicial Performance has publicly admonished former Judge Robert A. Schnider, who previously served on the Los Angeles County Superior Court.

Former Judge Schnider was the Family Law Supervising Judge for the Los Angeles County Superior Court from January 1, 2005 to December 31, 2007. His duties included the supervision of then-Commissioner Ann Dobbs, a commissioner in the Family Law Department. As her supervisor, Judge Schnider was aware that Commissioner Dobbs was not deciding all of her cases in a timely manner, but failed to take sufficient action to ensure that she did so in violation of canon 3C(3) of the Code of Judicial Ethics, which requires judges with supervisory authority for the judicial performance of other judges and commissioners to take reasonable measures to ensure the prompt disposition of matters before them.

Between 2005 and 2007, the court's monthly Cases Under Submission Reports identified 34 of Commissioner Dobbs's cases as being in the 30 to 60 day category. In violation of Rules of Court rule 10.603 (c)(3), Judge Schnider failed to contact Commissioner Dobbs to discuss ways to ensure that the cases were timely decided. As to the 33 cases that the Cases Under Submission Reports listed as being in the 60 to 90 day category between 2005 and 2007, Judge Schnider accepted repeated assurances from the commissioner without verification that the cases had been decided or that the submission dates were erroneous or had been vacated. While Judge Schnider reduced the commissioner's workload, the commissioner's cases were still not completed on time. Judge Schnider gave the commissioner time off to complete cases but took no action to determine whether she decided any cases during that time. In 2007, Judge Schnider became aware that several of Commissioner Dobbs's cases had not been decided within 90 days but were not listed on the court's Cases Under Submission Reports. Judge Schnider took no action to determine why the cases were not being reported. Judge Schnider also failed to promptly respond to at least three complaints from family law litigants about Commissioner Dobbs's delays as required by Rules of Court rule 10.703.

The commission concluded that Judge Schnider was seriously derelict in discharging his duty to supervise Commissioner Dobbs and demonstrated a disregard for the concerns of litigants who complained about their delayed cases. Judge Schnider's failure to properly discharge his supervisory responsibility resulted in significant financial and emotional harm to family law litigants and seriously undermined the integrity of the judiciary.

The decision and order is available on the commission's Web site at [www.cjp.ca.gov](http://www.cjp.ca.gov) (under "Press Releases" and "Public Discipline – 1960 to Present") and at the commission's office.

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The commission is composed of three judges, two lawyers, and six public members. The Chairperson is the Hon. Judith D. McConnell of the Court of Appeal, Fourth Appellate District, in San Diego, California.

For further information about the Commission on Judicial Performance, see the commission's Web site.